

# **Meeting summary for NEISA February Executive Committee Meeting (02/01/2024)**

## **Quick recap**

The meeting primarily focused on the Nationals budget. Beforehand, David Thompson discussed the ICSA Winter Meeting and highlighted ICSA's push to improve governance, sponsors, and transparency. The Committee will vote within the next week on the updated rules and regulations. There was mention of the NEISA Match Race Champs to be scheduled for fall week 3 at Corinthian Yacht Club. The proposal to rename the women's stocky after Amanda Callahan was discussed, as were the financial contributions needed for the forthcoming nationals event and the financial burdens of hosting conferences. The proposal for NEISA to contribute \$20,000 to MIT and Harvard to cover expenses for nationals was agreed to be put to a NEISA executive community vote. The Nationals meeting is set for Sunday, May 19th.

## **Summary**

### **Introduction**

Attendees were asked to sign into a Google Doc in the chat and fill in their names and schools. The new undergraduate representatives from NEISA introduced themselves and their positions.

### **General ICSA Updates**

Frank mentioned some general updates regarding CSR ratings and the new team race schedule. The updated fall CSR ratings have been posted on the ICSA website. There is currently a committee working on establishing a new team race schedule for future years. The goal is to get more competitions going between MAISA and across a broader spectrum of teams. This committee is expected to meet next week and have an update at the next meeting.

### **Report from the Winter Meeting in Park City**

David Thompson from the Coast Guard Academy discussed the meeting minutes from the winter meeting in Park City. He emphasized the importance of improving ICSA's general governance and its transparency. He mentioned that so far those efforts have been successful and will continue to improve in the future. Additionally, he discussed ICSA's efforts to clean up and expand sponsorship and finances. One of these expansions is to have media representation at national championships. He highlighted the importance of being mindful of expenses and ensuring revenue is available for new additions. A major focus was finding a host for the 2025 team race national championships, as Dartmouth was unable to take on the role. Due to the transparency initiative, a lot of reports were accepted at the meeting, but there were minimal changes to how we are run as a sport. NEISA brought different businesses to ICSA. Three of them passed, but they will not be in effect until next fall when an updated procedural rules is posted. These changes include updating the rules and regulations for team race tie breakers, the 80 rule for team race regattas, and moving the start time for the 2024 Fleet Race Nationals to be moved back as to allow teams to stay farther away and avoid rush hour. Further details can be found in the meeting minutes.

### **Update to Rules and Regulations**

David discussed how himself and Dan went through the past NEISA rules and regulations and updated all of the possible changes that have been voted on. The general operations of NEISA are up to date in this document. Justin Assad and Frank Pizzo expressed their appreciation for the effort put into updating the document and encouraged others to read it. David also mentioned that those who have proposals for new changes make sure that they reference the updated document. Frank and David agreed that the document should be voted on and approved during a week-long voting period via email.

### **Scheduling Updates**

Frank discussed the scheduling updates regarding the NEISA Match Race Champs for the fall of 2024. They will be held at Corinthian Yacht Club in Marblehead on fall week 3. They will be sailed in Sonars. The schedulers report that was accepted at the Midwinter meeting included a drop deadline of one month for cross regional events.

### **Cross-Regional Event Team Limits Discussed**

Justin Assad brought up the issue of whether or not teams should be allowed to enter multiple teams from one school in the cross regional events. Justin expressed that he believes teams should only be allowed to enter one team. Matt Lindblad mentioned that he believed that the host should be allowed to enter two teams to maintain an incentive for teams to host regattas. Jeffrey Bresnahan expressed apprehension about allowing second teams. Frank Pizzo decided to form an ad hoc committee to find a solution that benefits all teams and preserved competition. The discussion ended without a final decision, leaving the issue open for further discussion.

### **Women's Stocky Renaming Proposal**

The team discussed a proposal to rename the Women's Staake to the Callahan Trophy after Amanda Callahan, the current coach at Roger Williams, in recognition of her contributions to women's team racing in New England.

### **Nationals Event Budgeting**

Matt Lindblad then presented a partial budget for two team racing events, with an estimated total to be around \$57,560. The costs for fleet racing were similar with an estimated total of \$57,600. For the entirety of both nationals, they were looking at around \$115,000, including expenses like umpire and race official hotels, travel reimbursement, food, and other incidentals.

### **NEISA's Financial Contributions for Nationals Event**

Matt Lindblad discussed the financial contributions needed for the forthcoming nationals event, with NEISA expected to provide \$20,000. The discussion highlighted that this contribution was deemed sustainable given that NEISA hosts the event every four years. Frank Pizzo mentioned the team could look at this as contributing \$5,000 per event. He emphasized that NEISA's financial position was healthy enough to afford this contribution. Justin Assad proposed adding a surcharge to the Nationals registration fee as a potential funding source. The proposal was left open for further discussion.

Jeffrey Bresnahan proposed the idea of MIT and Harvard creating a blueprint for hosting conferences based on realistic costs. He emphasized the need for a national budget that other institutions could use as a reference. Matt suggested NEISA to advocate for the ICSA to realistically cost the events. The team also discussed the idea of NEISA providing a set amount for each event, which could help hosts secure funds earlier and potentially reduce the financial burden. Greg Wilkinson highlighted the historical resistance to raising entry fees significantly and emphasized the need for more sustainable solutions. He further discussed the financial issues surrounding ICSA and the reluctance of members to increase their contributions while simultaneously raising the expectations and costs for each event. He suggested that the solution isn't as simple as increasing entry fees and mentioned that some hosts, such as KP, MIT, and Harvard, have already begun contributing. Frank agreed with Greg's points and proposed that if New England hosts more events, they should contribute more to the hosts as they are collectively saving money by not traveling. Justin emphasized the need to be cautious about adding additional surcharges but reiterated that NEISA as a whole saves money by hosting these events.

Jeffrey Bresnahan suggested the creation of an ad hoc committee at the ICSA level composed of interested parties as well as professionals to address cost-cutting measures for the ICSA. Matt Lindblad asked the teams what their response would be if they were asked to pay double their current entry fee to sustain Nationals. Justin Assad expressed that he didn't see a significant issue with the proposed increase in team entry fees. Matt mentioned that although MIT and Harvard are comfortable contributing \$20,000 to the Nationals event, they did have to cut the expense of media coverage at the Semi-finals. Amanda Callahan emphasized the importance of media coverage for the sport. The group acknowledged that the cost of media coverage for the event is very substantial and has increased since 2019. Frank highlighted that the cost of the event is high and the ICSA should not expect the host to cover all costs.

### **ICSA Conference License Proposal and Nationals Meeting**

Frank proposed for NEISA to contribute \$20,000 to MIT and Harvard to cover expenses for nationals, which was seconded. The proposal was agreed to be put to a NEISA executive community vote. It was also mentioned that there would be a special meeting in February to discuss booster and financial matters, as well as the 2025 Team Race Nationals. The date for the Nationals meeting was set for Sunday, May 19th. The meeting was then adjourned.

### **Next steps**

- Vote on updated rules and regulations
- Form an ad hoc committee to investigate the issue of second teams at events and provide feedback at a later meeting.
- Vote on NEISA's contribution \$20,000 to MIT and Harvard this year to cover expenses for nationals.